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December 27, 2001

Roneta Hesse
Trial Attorney
Antitrust Division, Department of Justice
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Washington, DC 20530
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Subject: Support for Microsoft Settlement

Dear Ms. Hesse:

For the last 30 years as a senior management consultant to such companies as IBM, Kodak, Xerox, Burger King, Glaxo, Federal Express and others I have had the opportunity to work side by side with our corporate leaders to build a stronger US economy. In the last 10 years I have seen that economic base erode due to our government's priority focusing on international trade, free enterprise, and deregulation. The result has been a significant decline or near collapse in the US in our transportation industry, our steel industry, our textile industry, our utilities industry, and others. The most successful and greatest era of growth in the last 10 years has been in the information and communications industry that has provided the foundation for increased productivity, consumer and business knowledge, military intelligence, and millions of new jobs in almost every industry from finance to healthcare. The one company that has contributed the most to the US leadership in the world through its establishment of technology standards and integration of functionality has been Microsoft Corporation.

Now our Government leaders at both the Federal and State leaders are ready to undermine the one company who has provided this country that global leadership position through lawsuits and constraints that will undoubtedly allow foreign companies once again to gain a competitive advantage in our own country. I see Asian-based companies building a foundation that will dominate the hardware sector of our information industry. I see European companies doing the same in telecommunications. Microsoft Corporation's continuing expansion of its integrated technologies and application platforms allow companies of all sizes from the smallest to the largest to benefit from that leadership role and strategy. I know because those companies are my clients in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and other sectors of our business economy.

Please reflect on what our government has done in the past 10 years and do what you can to make the next decade one in which our government leaders support those companies like Microsoft Corporation who is doing its best to maintain a global leadership position for the good of our nation and its people. Do not let the lobbyists, the politically motivated, and the Microsoft competitors drive our government legislators and attorney generals to prosecute and persecute the one company that is still the brightest star in our economic arsenal fighting to maintain our economic survival in the ever growing world of foreign-based terrorism and protectionism.

The proposed settlement agreement that is now before the federal courts will provide adequate protections to all involved in this industry - Microsoft itself, its competitors, computer manufacturers, information technology providers and, most important of all, the consumer and end-user. It is time to accept this agreement, as the State of North Carolina has wisely done, and move forward.

Fred Brachman
President, Brachman Associates, Inc.